



NEWS RELEASE

NORTH DAKOTA HIGHWAY PATROL
600 East Boulevard
Bismarck, ND 58505-0240

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 15, 2008

CONTACT:
Lieutenant Michael Gerhart, NDHP
328-2455

PATROL JOINS NATIONWIDE LIFESAVING EFFORT

The North Dakota Highway Patrol will join law enforcement agencies nationwide as part of the May Mobilization safety restraint enforcement effort. From May 19 through June 1, 2008, troopers will join other law enforcement agencies in North Dakota and across the nation increasing their visibility on highways and intensifying enforcement efforts. Seat belt and child restraint laws will be strictly enforced!

Troopers will be assigned to work approximately 800 overtime hours over this 2-week time period in an effort to maintain high visibility on the state's highways. Funding for this effort is provided through a grant from the North Dakota Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Special emphasis will be placed on peak travel times, especially the Memorial holiday period. Troopers will be taking appropriate enforcement action against unbuckled vehicle occupants as well as cracking down on erratic driving behavior that increases the risk of and often results in the occurrence of a traffic crash. Motorists are encouraged to report erratic driving behavior or suspected impaired drivers by calling 911. So far in 2008, 54% of the fatal crashes in North Dakota have been alcohol related.

"The summer travel season kicks off with the Memorial Day holiday period," said Colonel Mark Nelson. Increased traffic can be expected on North Dakota highways. "Troopers will be highly visible and working hard providing quality law enforcement services to the traveling public with the goal of crash prevention," said Nelson. Four traffic deaths occurred on North Dakota highways during the 2007 Memorial holiday period.

The Patrol's overall enforcement and education efforts over the Memorial holiday period are also a part of C.A.R.E. (Combined Accident Reduction Effort) involving state police and highway patrol agencies across the nation.

-###-